

REMARKS

Applicant notes with appreciation that claim 3 has been allowed. It is believed that the above amendments and the following observations overcome all outstanding grounds for objection and/or rejection of the remaining claims, such that this application should now be in condition for allowance.

Claim Amendments

Claim 1 has been newly cancelled.

Claim 2 has been amended with respect to reducing the alkyl group scope in the definition of R^3 to a C_{3-4} alkyl, and to remove the unnecessary definitions of X, Y, m and n, which are all fixed by formula (IA). Support for C_{3-4} alkyl in the definition of R^3 is found, *inter alia*, at original specification page 4, lines 24-25 (substitute specification page 6, lines 7-8). Claim 2 has also been amended to remove inadvertent double spaces.

Claim 5 has been updated to be dependent on claim 2 and to refer to a compound of formula IA.

Withdrawn claim 7 has also been updated to be dependent on claim 2 and to refer to a compound of formula (IA), so as to maintain it in condition for rejoinder upon allowance of a generic claim. In addition, the duplicate recitation of "neurological disorders" has been deleted and an inadvertent double space has been removed.

New claims 9-16 have been added, with the support therefore being as follows:

- Support for new claim 9 is found at page 4, lines 8-9 of the original specification and at page 5, lines 24-25 of the substitute specification.
- Support for new claims 10, 11 and 12 is found at page 4, lines 15-17 of the original specification and at page 5, lines 31-33 of the substitute specification.
- Support for new claim 13 is found at page 4, lines 19-25 of the original specification and at page 6, lines 2-9 of the substitute specification.
- Support for new claim 14 is found at page 4, lines 24-25 of the original specification and at page 6, lines 7-8 of the substitute specification.
- Support for new claim 15 is found at page 4, lines 25-25 of the original specification and at page 6, lines 8-9 of the substitute specification.

- Support for new claim 16 is found at page 4, line 31 to page 5, line 1 of the original specification and at page 6, lines 14-16 of the substitute specification.

Each of new claims 9-16 falls within the scope of elected Group I and each such new claim encompasses the provisionally elected species.

These amendments are being made without disclaimer or prejudice to Applicant's right to prosecute any subject matter deleted thereby in one or more divisional or continuing applications. It should be clear from the above that no new matter has been added by these amendments, and entry thereof is believed to be in order and is respectfully requested.

Following entry of the above amendments, claims 2-3, 5 and 7-16 are pending in this application with claims 7 and 8 being designated as withdrawn, awaiting rejoinder.

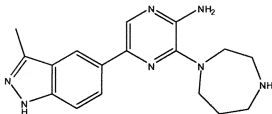
Restriction Requirement

Pursuant to the Examiner's request at page 2 of the Action, Applicant hereby confirms the election of Group I and the provisional election of the species of the compound of Example 1, as made in the Response to Restriction Requirement and Preliminary Amendment filed September 22, 2008. All pending claims fall within the elected Group (including new claims 9-16), and encompass the elected species.

The Examiner states in the middle of page 3 of the Action:

The elected species above has been found to be free of the prior art. Thus, the examiner has expanded the forthcoming prosecution to include all claims relevant to the genus of Group I, and has selected as an alternative species, 3-(1,4-diazepan-1-yl)-5-(3-methyl-1*H*-indazol-5-yl)pyrazin-2-amine, shown to the right above, for a first Office action and prosecution on the merits.

This "alternative species" is *not* "shown to the right above" in the Action, but it is believed that the compound 3-(1,4-diazepan-1-yl)-5-(3-methyl-1*H*-indazol-5-yl)pyrazin-2-amine has the structure:



Neither the meaning nor purpose of the Examiner selecting an “alternative species” is understood, particularly since it is not seen that *this* alternative species bears any relationship to the elected invention. Therefore, clarification is respectfully requested.

Specification

At pages 3-4 of the Action the Examiner has required Applicant to insert multiple headings in a particular format throughout the specification. Rather than making multiple, piecemeal insertions by amendment to the specification to comply with this requirement, substitute specification has been prepared. Therefore, submitted herewith are:

- (1) A version of the substitute specification with markings showing the insertions (shown by underline and a vertical line in the left margin) and deletions (shown by strike-through and a vertical line in the left margin); and *separately*
- (2) A clean version of the substitute specification without markings.

In addition to the specific headings requested by the Examiner, a new “Brief Summary of the Invention” has been inserted on page 2 of the marked version. The text and figures in this Brief Summary are taken from page 1, lines 20-24 and page 1, lines 4-7 of the original specification.

The undersigned hereby states that the substitute specification contains no new matter.

Specification - Disclosure

Under this heading at page 4 of the Action, the Examiner notes that the reaction schemes with respect to Step D on page 18 of the specification, and Step E on page 19 of the specification “are abridged on the right.” These reaction schemes are complete in the PCT application as filed, but apparently were cut off in the right-hand margin upon publication. A reduced image of these two reaction schemes has been inserted in the substitute specification (see pages 20-21 in the marked up copy of the substitute specification, and page 20 of the clean copy of the substitute specification). There can be no issue of “new matter” by reason of this insertion since the intended presence of this “4-fluorobenzyl” group is clear from the compound name in the heading of Step D and Step E as it appears in the published PCT application provided to the US Patent and Trademark Office by the International Bureau.

Specification - Abstract

The Examiner has requested that Applicant amend the Abstract to “reflect the scope of the *Requirement for Restriction / Election of Species*, mailed on May 20, 2000.” To effect the required changes, a substitute Abstract (on a separate page) has been prepared. Therefore, submitted herewith are:

- (1) A version of the substitute Abstract with markings showing the insertions (shown by underline and a vertical line in the left margin) and deletions (shown by strike-through and a vertical line in the left margin); and *separately*
- (4) A clean version of the substitute Abstract without markings.

The amendments made in this substitute Abstract are relative to the text and figure of the original Abstract presented on the first page of the corresponding PCT application published as WO 2005/051953 that included with the application as filed. By these amendments, the Abstract is now directed toward the invention as elected and presently claimed in amended claim 2, which is presented above and discussed below.

The substitute Abstract submitted herewith has been amended accordingly so that the substitute Abstract reflects the structure (formula IA) and the compound scope of elected generic claim 2 as presently amended. The undersigned hereby states that the substitute Abstract contains no new matter.

Claim Objections

The objection to claim 1 has been obviated by the cancellation of claim 1.

The objection to claim 2 has been overcome by correction of the noted errors in claim 2 made by the above amendments.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112, First Paragraph

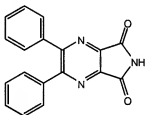
At page 5 of the Action, claims 1 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, on the assertion that “the specification, while being enabling for substituted pyrrolopyrazines and pharmaceutical compositions of the formula I, where $m = 0$ and $n = 0$, does not reasonably provide enablement for substituted pyrrolopyrazines and pharmaceutical compositions of the formula I, where $m \neq 0$ and $n \neq 0$.”

Without necessarily agreeing with this assertion, but in a sincere effort to advance the prosecution of this application to allowance, claim 1 has been cancelled above. Independent claim 2 is directed toward compounds of formula (IA) (wherein effectively $m = 0$ and $n = 0$), which claim was not subject to this rejection, and claim 5, now dependent on claim 2, is also limited to a pharmaceutical formulation comprising a compound of formula (IA) as claimed in claim 2.

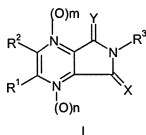
Therefore, it is believed that this ground for rejection has been overcome and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested. Inasmuch as new claims 9-16 are all dependent on claim 2, they too would not be subject to this ground for rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

At page 10 of the Action, claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsuda in view of Patani. Tsuda is cited as teaching the synthesis of substituted pyrrolopyrazines of formula:



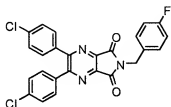
which is compared against formula I of the present application:



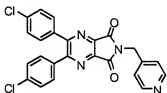
wherein $m = 0$; $n = 0$; $X = -O-$; $Y = -O-$; $R^1 = -Ph$; $R^2 = -Ph$; and $R^3 = -CH_3(C_{1-15}alkyl)$. The Examiner comments that the only difference between applicant's instantly recited substituted pyrrolopyrazines of the formula I and Tsuda's substituted pyrrolopyrazines is R^3 can be $-CH_3$ in the then-claimed compounds of formula I whereas the equivalent of R^3 is $-H$ in Tsuda. The Examiner therefore cites Patani as teaching "the relationship between $-CH_3$ groups and $-H$

atoms as monovalent bioisosteres, which exert similar biological activity [citation omitted] via Grimm's Hydride Displacement Law [citations omitted].”

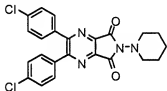
On the other hand, the Examiner has allowed claim 3, which recites the specific compounds:



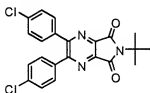
2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-6-(4-fluorobenzyl)-5H-pyrrolo[3,4-b]pyrazine-5,7(6H)-dione



2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-6-(pyridin-4-ylmethyl)-5H-pyrrolo[3,4-b]pyrazine-5,7(6H)-dione



2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-6-piperidin-1-yl-5H-pyrrolo[3,4-b]pyrazine-5,7(6H)-dione



6-tert-butyl-2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-5H-pyrrolo[3,4-b]pyrazine-5,7(6H)-dione

which compounds are said to be neither anticipated nor obviated by the prior art by reason of the types of R^1 , R^2 and R^3 substituents. Inasmuch as amended claim 2 is now more limited to types of substituents corresponding to those of the compounds of claim 3, it is believed that present claim 2 also is neither anticipated nor obviated by the prior art. Since as all other claims are dependent on claim 2, the remaining claims necessarily are neither anticipated nor

obviated by the prior art. Withdrawal of this ground for rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Table of Technically Related Applications of Applicant's Assignee

Applicant wishes to bring to the Examiner's attention the following applications or recent patents of Applicant's assignee, which may be considered to be technically related to the present application by reason of similar heterocyclic cores:

U.S. Serial No. Filing Date	Inventor	US Pub. No. Pub. Date	PCT Pub. No. PCT Pub. Date	Current Status
10/499,054 08-Oct-2004	Anna Ingrid Kristina Berggren et al.	US 2005-0032808 A1 10-Feb-2005	WO 03/051851 26-Jun-2003	Patented (Patent No. 7,342,019; issued March 11, 2008)
10/543,264 25-Jul-2005	Lennart Lindfors	US 2006-0134146 A1 22-Jun-2006	WO 2004/069277 19-Aug-2004	Patented (Patent No. 7,473,693; issued January 6, 2009)
10/560,862 15-Dec-2005	Leifeng Cheng	US 2007-0093484 A1 26-Apr-2007	WO 2004/111034 23-Dec-2004	Pending before Examiner Jaisle, GAU 1624; RCE filed August 8, 2008
10/561,060 16-Dec-2005	Leifeng Cheng et al.	US 2006-0135523 A1 22-Jun-2006	WO 2004/111033 23-Dec-2004	Notice of Allowance Mailed December 3, 2008
10/561,033 16-Dec-2005	Leifeng Cheng et al.	US 2007-0093505 A1 26-Apr-2007	WO 2004/111039 23-Dec-2004	Notice of Allowance Mailed December 1, 2008

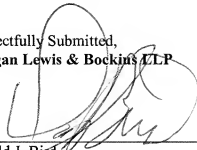
It is believed that the Examiner has electronic access to the contents of each of these files. Each issued US patent and published PCT application cited above and not yet of record in this application is listed on the form PTO-1449 accompanying the Information Disclosure Statement submitted herewith, and a copy of each cited published PCT application is being provided therewith. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner consider each of the cited documents and acknowledge consideration thereof by returning an initialed copy of the form PTO-1449 to the undersigned.

Conclusion

All grounds for objection and/or rejection having been considered and, it is believed, overcome by the above amendments and/or arguments, it is respectfully requested that all grounds for rejection be withdrawn and that this application be allowed. If there remain any outstanding issues, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned at the number given below so that the resolution of such issue may be expedited.

EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Director is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account 50-0310. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully Submitted,
Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP



Date: January 28, 2009
Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP
Customer No. **09629**
1111 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004
Tel. No.: 202-739-3000
DJB:

By:

Donald J. Bird
Registration No. 25,323
Tel. No.: (202) 739-5320
Fax No.: (202) 739-3001

APPLICATION No. 10/579,830

***Substitute Specification
Marked to Show Changes***

THERAPEUTIC AGENTS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

5 The present application is a U.S. National Phase Application of International Application No. PCT/GB2004/004934 (filed November 24, 2004) which claims the benefit of Great Britain Patent Application No. 0327331.5 (filed November 25, 2003).

10 **STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY
SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT**

Not applicable.

15 **THE NAMES OF THE PARTIES TO A JOINT
RESEARCH AGREEMENT**

Not applicable.

20 **INCORPORATION-BY-REFERENCE OF MATERIAL
SUBMITTED ON A COMPACT DISC**

Not applicable.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

25 **(1) Field of the Invention**

Field of invention

30 The present invention relates to certain compounds of formula I, to processes for preparing such compounds, to their use in the treatment of obesity, psychiatric and neurological disorders, to methods for their therapeutic use and to pharmaceutical compositions containing them.

(2) Descriptoin of Related Art

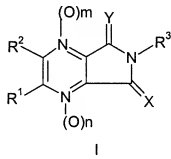
Background of the invention

It is known that certain CB₁ modulators (known as antagonists or inverse agonists) are useful in the treatment of obesity, psychiatric and neurological disorders (WO01/70700 and EP 656354). However, there is a need for CB₁ modulators with improved physicochemical properties and/or DMPK properties and/or pharmacodynamic properties.

2,3-Diphenyl- 5H-pyrrolo[3,4-b]pyrazine-5,7(6H)-dione is disclosed in Agricultural and Biological Chemistry (1981), 45(9), 2129-30 and in Journal of Polymer Science, Polymer Chemistry Edition (1971), 9(4), 1117-38.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to a compound of formula (I)



and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof, as more fully described below. The invention also relates processes for preparing such compounds, to their use in the treatment of obesity, psychiatric and neurological disorders, to methods for their therapeutic use and to pharmaceutical compositions containing them.

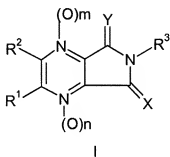
Description of the invention

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Not Applicable.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to a compound of formula (I)



and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof, in which

R^1 and R^2 independently represent phenyl, thienyl, pyridyl, C_{1-10} alkyl, C_{1-10} alkoxy or C_{3-15} cycloalkyl ;

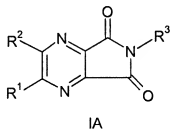
R^3 represents a C_{1-15} alkyl group, C_{3-15} cycloalkyl, a phenyl C_{1-4} alkyl group, a heteroaryl group, a heteroaryl C_{1-4} alkyl group, or a group $R^4(CH_2)_n$ - in which R^4 represents a saturated or partially unsaturated 5 to 8 membered heterocyclic group containing one or more heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen or sulphur and n is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4; X and Y independently represent O or S;

m and n independently represent 0 or 1;

wherein each of R^1 , R^2 , R^3 and R^4 is optionally substituted by one, two or three groups represented by Z wherein Z represents a C_{1-6} alkyl group optionally substituted by one or more fluoro, a C_{1-6} alkoxy group optionally substituted by one or more fluoro, hydroxy, halo, trifluoromethylsulphonyl, benzyl, nitro, amino, mono or di C_{1-4} alkylamino, mono or di C_{1-3} alkylamido, C_{1-3} alkylsulphonyl, C_{1-6} alkoxycarbonyl, carboxy, cyano, carbamoyl, mono or di C_{1-3} alkyl carbamoyl, sulphamoyl or acetyl.

In a particular group of compounds of formula I, R^1 and R^2 independently represent phenyl, thienyl, pyridyl, C_{1-10} alkyl, C_{1-10} alkoxy or C_{3-15} cycloalkyl ;
 R^3 represents a C_{1-15} alkyl group, C_{3-15} cycloalkyl, a phenyl C_{1-4} alkyl group, a heteroaryl C_{1-4} alkyl group, or a group $R^4(CH_2)_n$ in which R^4 represents a saturated or partially
 5 unsaturated 5 to 8 membered heterocyclic group containing one or more heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen or sulphur and n is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4;
 X and Y independently represent O or S;
 m and n independently represent 0 or 1;
 wherein each of R^1 , R^2 , R^3 and R^4 is optionally substituted by one, two or three groups
 10 represented by Z wherein Z represents a C_{1-6} alkyl group optionally substituted by one or more fluoro, a C_{1-6} alkoxy group optionally substituted by one or more fluoro, hydroxy, halo, trifluoromethylsulphonyl, benzyl, nitro, amino, mono or di C_{1-4} alkylamino, mono or di C_{1-3} alkylamido, C_{1-3} alkylsulphonyl, C_{1-6} alkoxycarbonyl, carboxy, cyano, carbamoyl, mono or di C_{1-3} alkyl carbamoyl, sulphamoyl or acetyl.

A particular group of compounds of formula I is represented by formula IA



in which R^1 , R^2 and R^3 are as previously defined in either the first or second paragraph
 20 immediately above.

It will be understood that where a substituent Z is present in more than one group that these substituents are independently selected and may be the same or different.

25 The term C_{3-15} cycloalkyl includes monocyclic, bicyclic, tricyclic and spiro systems for example, cyclopentyl, cyclohexyl and adamantyl.

The term heteroaryl means an aromatic 5-, 6-, or 7-membered monocyclic ring or a 9- or 10-membered bicyclic ring, with up to five ring heteroatoms selected from oxygen, nitrogen and sulfur. Suitable aromatic heteroaryl groups include, for example furyl, pyrrolyl, thienyl, oxazolyl, isoxazolyl, imidazolyl, pyrazolyl, thiazolyl, isothiazolyl, oxadiazolyl, thiadiazolyl, triazolyl, tetrazolyl, pyridyl, pyridazinyl, pyrimidinyl, pyrazinyl, 1,3,5-triazenyl, benzofuranlyl, indolyl, benzothienyl, benzoxazolyl, benzimidazolyl, benzothiazolyl, indazolyl, benzofurazanyl, quinolyl, isoquinolyl, quinazolinyl, quinoxalyl, cinnolinyl or naphthyridinyl. Preferably furyl, pyrrolyl, thienyl, oxazolyl, isoxazolyl, imidazolyl, pyrazolyl, oxazolyl, thiazolyl, isothiazolyl, oxadiazolyl, thiadiazolyl, triazolyl, tetrazolyl, pyridyl, pyridazinyl, pyrimidinyl, pyrazinyl or 1,3,5-triazenyl and more preferably pyrrolyl, thienyl, imidazolyl, oxazolyl or pyridyl.

Suitable saturated or partially unsaturated 5 to 8 membered heterocyclic groups containing one or more heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen or sulphur include, for example oxiranyl, oxetanyl, tetrahydrofuranlyl, tetrahydropyranlyl, 2,3-dihydro-1,3-thiazolyl, 1,3-thiazolidinyl, pyrrolinyl, pyrrolidinyl, morpholinyl, tetrahydro-1,4-thiazinyl, 1-oxotetrahydrothienyl, 1,1-dioxotetrahydro-1,4-thiazinyl, piperidinyl, homopiperidinyl, piperazinyl, homopiperazinyl, dihydropyridinyl, tetrahydropyridinyl, dihydropyrimidinyl or tetrahydropyrimidinyl, preferably tetrahydrofuranlyl, tetrahydropyranlyl, pyrrolidinyl, morpholinyl, piperidinyl or piperazinyl, more preferably tetrahydrofuran-3-yl, tetrahydropyran-4-yl, pyrrolidin-3-yl, morpholino, piperidino, piperidin-4-yl or piperazin-1-yl.

Particularly Z represents halo, trifluoromethyl, trifluoromethylthio, difluoromethoxy or trifluoromethoxy.

Further values of R^1 , R^2 , R^3 , and R^4 in compounds of formula I and compounds of formula IA now follow. It will be understood that such values may be used where appropriate with any of the definitions, claims or embodiments defined hereinbefore or hereinafter.

R^1 and R^2 independently represent phenyl optionally substituted independently by one or two halo. Particularly R^1 and R^2 are identical. More particularly R^1 and R^2 each represent 4-chlorophenyl.

R³ represents a phenylC₁₋₄alkyl, pyridylC₁₋₄alkyl, a C₁₋₆alkyl group, piperidino, morpholino, pyrrolidino wherein the phenyl ring is optionally substituted by halo and the pyridyl ring is optionally substituted by one or more of the following :halo, a C₁₋₆alkyl group (optionally substituted by one or more fluoro for example trifluoromethyl), or a C₁₋₆alkoxy group (optionally substituted by one or more fluoro for example difluoromethoxy or trifluoromethoxy). Particularly R³ represents benzyl, halobenzyl, pyridylmethyl, piperidino or a C₃₋₄alkyl group. More particularly R³ represents 4-fluorobenzyl, 4-pyridylmethyl, piperidino or *tert*-butyl.

X and Y both present O.

m and n are both 0.

In one group of compounds of formula I R¹ and R² independently represent phenyl optionally substituted independently by one or two chloro, R³ represents benzyl, halobenzyl, pyridylmethyl, piperidino or a C₃₋₄alkyl group, X and Y are both O and m and n are both 0.

“Pharmaceutically acceptable salt”, where such salts are possible, includes both pharmaceutically acceptable acid and base addition salts. A suitable pharmaceutically acceptable salt of a compound of Formula I is, for example, an acid-addition salt of a compound of Formula I which is sufficiently basic, for example an acid-addition salt with an inorganic or organic acid such as hydrochloric, hydrobromic, sulphuric, trifluoroacetic, citric or maleic acid; or, for example a salt of a compound of Formula I which is sufficiently acidic, for example an alkali or alkaline earth metal salt such as a sodium, calcium or magnesium salt, or an ammonium salt, or a salt with an organic base such as methylamine, dimethylamine, trimethylamine, piperidine, morpholine or tris-(2-hydroxyethyl)amine.

Throughout the specification and the appended claims, a given chemical formula or name shall encompass all stereo and optical isomers and racemates thereof as well as mixtures in different proportions of the separate enantiomers, where such isomers and enantiomers exist, as well as pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof and solvates thereof such as for

instance hydrates. Isomers may be separated using conventional techniques, e.g. chromatography or fractional crystallisation. The enantiomers may be isolated by separation of racemate for example by fractional crystallisation, resolution or HPLC. The diastereomers may be isolated by separation of isomer mixtures for instance by fractional crystallisation, HPLC or flash chromatography. Alternatively the stereoisomers may be made by chiral synthesis from chiral starting materials under conditions which will not cause racemisation or epimerisation, or by derivatisation, with a chiral reagent. All stereoisomers are included within the scope of the invention. All tautomers, where possible, are included within the scope of the invention.

The following definitions shall apply throughout the specification and the appended claims.

Unless otherwise stated or indicated, the term "alkyl" denotes either a straight or branched alkyl group. Examples of said alkyl include methyl, ethyl, n-propyl, isopropyl, n-butyl, iso-butyl, sec-butyl and t-butyl. Preferred alkyl groups are methyl, ethyl, propyl, isopropyl and tertiary butyl.

Unless otherwise stated or indicated, the term "alkoxy" denotes a group O-alkyl, wherein alkyl is as defined above.

Unless otherwise stated or indicated, the term "halogen" shall mean fluorine, chlorine, bromine or iodine.

Specific compounds of the invention are one or more of the following:

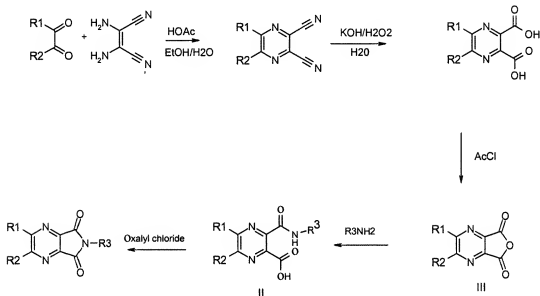
2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-6-(4-fluorobenzyl)-5H-pyrrolo[3,4-b]pyrazine-5,7(6H)-dione;
2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-6-(pyridin-4-ylmethyl)-5H-pyrrolo[3,4-b]pyrazine-5,7(6H)-dione;
2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-6-piperidin-1-yl-5H-pyrrolo[3,4-b]pyrazine-5,7(6H)-dione; or
6-tert-butyl-2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-5H-pyrrolo[3,4-b]pyrazine-5,7(6H)-dione
as well as pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.

Methods of preparation

The compounds of the invention may be prepared as outlined below according to any of the following methods. However, the invention is not limited to these methods, the compounds may also be prepared as described for structurally related compounds in the prior art.

Compounds of formula I in which m and n are each 0 and X and Y are both O are prepared by reacting a compound of formula II with a dehydrating agent for example oxalyl chloride optionally in the presence of a solvent for the compound of formula II at a temperature in the range of 0-100°C.

Synthetic Scheme



Compounds of formula I in which either X or Y or both X and Y are S may be prepared by reacting a compound of formula I in which X and Y are both O with an appropriate molar amount of Lawesson's reagent by methods known to those skilled in the art.

Compounds of formula I in which either of n and m is 1 or both are 1 may be prepared by oxidising a compound of formula I in which n and m are both 0 with an appropriate molar quantity of oxidising agent for example a peroxide e.g. hydrogen peroxide or sulphuric peroxide.

Certain compounds of formula II and III are believed to be novel and form part of the present invention.

5 Pharmaceutical preparations

The compounds of the invention will normally be administered via the oral, parenteral, intravenous, intramuscular, subcutaneous or in other injectable ways, buccal, rectal, vaginal, transdermal and/or nasal route and/or via inhalation, in the form of pharmaceutical
10 preparations comprising the active ingredient or a pharmaceutically acceptable addition salt, in a pharmaceutically acceptable dosage form. Depending upon the disorder and patient to be treated and the route of administration, the compositions may be administered at varying doses.

15 Suitable daily doses of the compounds of the invention in the therapeutic treatment of humans are about 0.001-10 mg/kg body weight, preferably 0.01-1 mg/kg body weight.

Oral formulations are preferred particularly tablets or capsules which may be formulated by methods known to those skilled in the art to provide doses of the active compound in
20 the range of 0.5mg to 500mg for example 1 mg, 3 mg, 5 mg, 10 mg, 25mg, 50mg, 100mg and 250mg.

According to a further aspect of the invention there is also provided a pharmaceutical formulation including any of the compounds of the invention, or pharmaceutically
25 acceptable derivatives thereof, in admixture with pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvants, diluents and/or carriers.

Pharmacological properties

The compounds of formula (I) are useful for the treatment of obesity, psychiatric disorders
30 such as psychotic disorders, schizophrenia, bipolar disorders, anxiety, anxio-depressive disorders, depression, cognitive disorders, memory disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, anorexia, bulimia, attention disorders like ADHD, epilepsy, and related conditions, and neurological disorders such as dementia, neurological disorders(e.g.

Multiple Sclerosis), Raynaud's syndrome, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's chorea and Alzheimer's disease. The compounds are also potentially useful for the treatment of immune, cardiovascular, reproductive and endocrine disorders, septic shock and diseases related to the respiratory and gastrointestinal systems (e.g. diarrhea). The compounds are also potentially useful as agents in treatment of extended abuse, addiction and/or relapse indications, e.g. treating drug (nicotine, ethanol, cocaine, opiates, etc) dependence and/or treating drug (nicotine, ethanol, cocaine, opiates, etc) withdrawal symptoms. The compounds may also eliminate the increase in weight which normally accompanies the cessation of smoking.

In another aspect the present invention provides a compound of formula I as previously defined for use as a medicament.

In a further aspect the present invention provides the use of a compound of formula I in the preparation of a medicament for the treatment or prophylaxis of obesity, psychiatric disorders such as psychotic disorders, schizophrenia, bipolar disorders, anxiety, anxiety-depressive disorders, depression, cognitive disorders, memory disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, anorexia, bulimia, attention disorders like ADHD, epilepsy, and related conditions, neurological disorders such as dementia, neurological disorders (e.g. Multiple Sclerosis), Parkinson's Disease, Huntington's Chorea and Alzheimer's Disease, immune, cardiovascular, reproductive and endocrine disorders, septic shock, diseases related to the respiratory and gastrointestinal systems (e.g. diarrhea), and extended abuse, addiction and/or relapse indications, e.g. treating drug (nicotine, ethanol, cocaine, opiates, etc) dependence and/or treating drug (nicotine, ethanol, cocaine, opiates, etc) withdrawal symptoms.

In a still further aspect the present invention provides a method of treating obesity, psychiatric disorders such as psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorders, anxiety, anxiety-depressive disorders, depression, cognitive disorders, memory disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, anorexia, bulimia, attention disorders like ADHD, epilepsy, and related conditions, neurological disorders such as dementia, neurological disorders (e.g. Multiple Sclerosis), Parkinson's Disease, Huntington's Chorea and Alzheimer's Disease, immune, cardiovascular, reproductive and endocrine disorders,

septic shock, diseases related to the respiratory and gastrointestinal systems (e.g. diarrhea), and extended abuse, addiction and/or relapse indications, e.g. treating drug (nicotine, ethanol, cocaine, opiates, etc) dependence and/or treating drug (nicotine, ethanol, cocaine, opiates, etc) withdrawal symptoms comprising administering a pharmacologically effective amount of a compound of formula I to a patient in need thereof.

The compounds of the present invention are particularly suitable for the treatment of obesity, e.g. by reduction of appetite and body weight, maintenance of weight reduction and prevention of rebound.

The compounds of the present invention may also be used to prevent or reverse medication-induced weight gain, e.g. weight gain caused by antipsychotic (neuroleptic) treatment(s). The compounds of the present invention may also be used to prevent or reverse weight gain associated with smoking cessation.

The compounds of this invention may be useful in the inhibition of osteoclasts and the inhibition of bone resorption for the treatment of bone disorders, such as osteoporosis, for cancer associated bone disease and hypercalcemia of malignancies, and for treatment of Paget's bone disease. Compounds of this invention may also be useful in the treatment of other bone disorders with an inflammatory background such as osteo-arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and for steroid/drug- induced osteoporosis.

Combination Therapy

The compounds of the invention may be combined with another therapeutic agent that is useful in the treatment of disorders associated with the development and progress of obesity such as hypertension, hyperlipidaemias, dyslipidaemias, diabetes and atherosclerosis. For example, a compound of the present invention may be used in combination with a compound that affects thermogenesis, lipolysis, fat absorption, satiety, or gut motility. The compounds of the invention may be combined with another therapeutic agent that decreases the ratio of LDL:HDL or an agent that causes a decrease in circulating levels of LDL-cholesterol. In patients with diabetes mellitus the compounds of the invention may also be combined with therapeutic agents used to treat complications related to micro-angiopathies.

The compounds of the invention may be used alongside other therapies for the treatment of obesity and its associated complications the metabolic syndrome and type 2 diabetes, these include biguanide drugs, insulin (synthetic insulin analogues) and oral antihyperglycemics (these are divided into prandial glucose regulators and alpha-glucosidase inhibitors).

In another aspect of the invention, the compound of formula I, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof may be administered in association with a PPAR modulating agent. PPAR modulating agents include but are not limited to a PPAR alpha and/or gamma agonist, or pharmaceutically acceptable salts, solvates, solvates of such salts or prodrugs thereof. Suitable PPAR alpha and/or gamma agonists, pharmaceutically acceptable salts, solvates, solvates of such salts or prodrugs thereof are well known in the art.

In addition the combination of the invention may be used in conjunction with a sulfonylurea. The present invention also includes a compound of the present invention in combination with a cholesterol-lowering agent. The cholesterol-lowering agents referred to in this application include but are not limited to inhibitors of HMG-CoA reductase (3-hydroxy-3-methylglutaryl coenzyme A reductase). Suitably the HMG-CoA reductase inhibitor is a statin

In the present application, the term "cholesterol-lowering agent" also includes chemical modifications of the HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors, such as esters, prodrugs and metabolites, whether active or inactive.

The present invention also includes a compound of the present invention in combination with an inhibitor of the ileal bile acid transport system (IBAT inhibitor). The present invention also includes a compound of the present invention in combination with a bile acid binding resin.

The present invention also includes a compound of the present invention in combination with a bile acid sequestering agent, for example colestipol or cholestyramine or cholestagel

According to an additional further aspect of the present invention there is provided a combination treatment comprising the administration of an effective amount of a compound of the formula I, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, optionally

together with a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or carrier, with the simultaneous, sequential or separate administration one or more of the following agents selected from:

a CETP (cholesteryl ester transfer protein) inhibitor;

a cholesterol absorption antagonist;

5 a MTP (microsomal transfer protein) inhibitor ;

a nicotinic acid derivative, including slow release and combination products;

a phytosterol compound ;

probucol;

an anti-coagulant;

10 an omega-3 fatty acid ;

another anti-obesity compound;

an antihypertensive compound for example an angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE)

inhibitor, an angiotensin II receptor antagonist, an adrenergic blocker, an alpha

adrenergic blocker, a beta adrenergic blocker, a mixed alpha/beta adrenergic blocker,

15 an adrenergic stimulant, calcium channel blocker, an AT-1 blocker, a saluretic, a diuretic or a vasodilator;

a Melanin concentrating hormone (MCH) antagonist;

a PDK inhibitor; or

modulators of nuclear receptors for example LXR, FXR, RXR, and RORalpha;

20 an SSRI;

a serotonin antagonist;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt, solvate, solvate of such a salt or a prodrug thereof,

optionally together with a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or carrier to a warm-blooded animal, such as man in need of such therapeutic treatment.

25

Therefore in an additional feature of the invention, there is provided a method for the treatment of obesity and its associated complications in a warm-blooded animal, such as man, in need of such treatment which comprises administering to said animal an effective amount of a compound of formula I, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof in
30 simultaneous, sequential or separate administration with an effective amount of a compound from one of the other classes of compounds described in this combination section, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt, solvate, solvate of such a salt or a prodrug thereof.

Therefore in an additional feature of the invention, there is provided a method of treating hyperlipidemic conditions in a warm-blooded animal, such as man, in need of such treatment which comprises administering to said animal an effective amount of a compound of formula I, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof in simultaneous, sequential or separate administration with an effective amount of a compound from one of the other classes of compounds described in this combination section or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt, solvate, solvate of such a salt or a prodrug thereof.

According to a further aspect of the invention there is provided a pharmaceutical composition which comprises a compound of formula I, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and a compound from one of the other classes of compounds described in this combination section or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt, solvate, solvate of such a salt or a prodrug thereof, in association with a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or carrier.

According to a further aspect of the present invention there is provided a kit comprising a compound of formula I, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and a compound from one of the other classes of compounds described in this combination section or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt, solvate, solvate of such a salt or a prodrug thereof.

According to a further aspect of the present invention there is provided a kit comprising:

- a) a compound of formula I, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, in a first unit dosage form;
- b) a compound from one of the other classes of compounds described in this combination section or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt, solvate, solvate of such a salt or a prodrug thereof; in a second unit dosage form; and
- c) container means for containing said first and second dosage forms.

According to a further aspect of the present invention there is provided a kit comprising:

- a) a compound of formula I, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, together with a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or carrier, in a first unit dosage form;

- b) a compound from one of the other classes of compounds described in this combination section or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt, solvate, solvate of such a salt or a prodrug thereof, in a second unit dosage form; and
- c) container means for containing said first and second dosage forms.

5

According to another feature of the invention there is provided the use of a compound of the formula I, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and one of the other compounds described in this combination section, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt, solvate, solvate of such a salt or a prodrug thereof, in the manufacture of a medicament for use in the the treatment of obesity and its associated complications in a warm-blooded animal, such as man.

10

According to another feature of the invention there is provided the use of a compound of the formula I, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and one of the other compounds described in this combination section, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt, solvate, solvate of such a salt or a prodrug thereof, in the manufacture of a medicament for use in the treatment of hyperlipidaemic conditions in a warm-blooded animal, such as man.

15

According to a further aspect of the present invention there is provided a combination treatment comprising the administration of an effective amount of a compound of the formula I, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, optionally together with a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or carrier, with the simultaneous, sequential or separate administration of an effective amount of one of the other compounds described in this combination section, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt, solvate, solvate of such a salt or a prodrug thereof, optionally together with a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or carrier to a warm-blooded animal, such as man in need of such therapeutic treatment.

20

25

Furthermore, a compound of the invention may also be combined with therapeutic agents that are useful in the treatment of disorders or conditions associated with obesity (such as type II diabetes, metabolic syndrome, dyslipidemia, impaired glucose tolerance, hypertension, coronary heart disease, non-alcoholic steatorheic hepatitis, osteoarthritis and some cancers) and psychiatric and neurological conditions.

30

Pharmacological Activity

Compounds of the present invention are active against the receptor product of the CB1 gene. The affinity of the compounds of the invention for central cannabinoid receptors is demonstrable in methods described in Devane et al , Molecular Pharmacology, 1988, 34,605 or those described in WO01/70700 or EP 656354. Alternatively the assay may be performed as follows.

10 μ g of membranes prepared from cells stably transfected with the CB1 gene were suspended in 200 μ l of 100mM NaCl, 5mM MgCl₂, 1mM EDTA, 50mM HEPES (pH 7.4), 1mM DTT, 0.1% BSA and 100 μ M GDP. To this was added an EC80 concentration of agonist (CP55940), the required concentration of test compound and 0.1 μ Ci [³⁵S]-GTP γ S.

10 The reaction was allowed to proceed at 30°C for 45 min. Samples were then transferred on to GF/B filters using a cell harvester and washed with wash buffer (50mM Tris (pH 7.4), 5mM MgCl₂, 50mM NaCl). Filters were then covered with scintillant and counted for the amount of [³⁵S]-GTP γ S retained by the filter.

Activity is measured in the absence of all ligands (minimum activity) or in the presence of an EC80 concentration of CP55940 (maximum activity). These activities are set as 0% and 100% activity respectively. At various concentrations of novel ligand, activity is calculated as a percentage of the maximum activity and plotted. The data are fitted using the equation $y = A + ((B - A) / (1 + ((C/x)^D)))$ and the IC₅₀ value determined as the concentration required to give half maximal inhibition of GTP γ S binding under the conditions used.

The compounds of the present invention are active at the CB1 receptor (IC₅₀ <1 micromolar). Most preferred compounds have IC₅₀ <200 nanomolar.

The compounds of the invention are believed to be selective CB1 antagonists.

25 Examples

Abbreviations

DCM - dichloromethane

DMF - dimethylformamide

30 DMAP - 4-dimethylaminopyridine

EDC - 1-(3-dimethylaminopropyl)-3-ethylcarbodiimide

TEA - triethylamine

TFA – trifluoroacetic acid

DMSO-dimethyl sulfoxide

DEA - Diethylamine

PCC - Pyridinium chlorochromate

5 PyBOP - benzotriazol-1-yl-oxytri-pyrrolidinophosphonium hexafluorophosphate

HBUTU - *O*-Benzotriazol-1-yl-*N,N,N',N'*-tetramethyluronium Hexafluorophosphate

DAST-(diethyl amino)sulphur trifluoride

DIEA - *N,N*-diisopropylethylamine

t triplet

10 s singlet

d doublet

q quartet

qvint quintet

m multiplet

15 br broad

bs broad singlet

dm doublet of multiplet

bt broad triplet

dd doublet of doublet

20

General Experimental Procedures

Mass spectra were recorded on either a Micromass ZQ single quadrupole or a Micromass

LCZ single quadrupole mass spectrometer both equipped with a pneumatically assisted

electrospray interface (LC-MS). ¹H NMR measurements were performed on either a

25 Varian Mercury 300 or a Varian Inova 500, operating at ¹H frequencies of 300 and 500

MHz respectively. Chemical shifts are given in ppm with CDCl₃ as internal standard.

CDCl₃ is used as the solvent for NMR unless otherwise stated. Purification was performed

on a semipreparative HPLC with a mass triggered fraction collector, Shimadzu QP 8000

single quadrupole mass spectrometer equipped with 19 x 100 mm C8 column. The mobile

30 phase used was, if nothing else is stated, acetonitrile and buffer (0.1 M NH₄Ac:acetonitrile

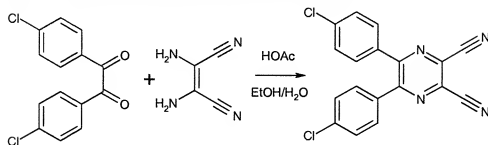
95:5).

For isolation of isomers, a Kromasil CN E9344 (250 x 20 mm i.d.) column was used. Heptane:ethyl acetate:DEA 95:5:0.1 was used as mobile phase (1 ml/min). Fraction collection was guided using a UV-detector (330 nm).

5 Examples of the Invention

Example 1

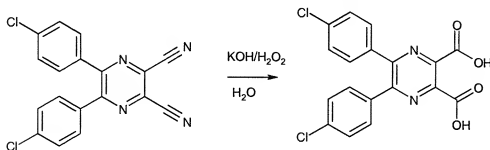
Step A 5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)pyrazine-2,3-dicarbonitrile



A mixture of 1,2-bis(4-chlorophenyl)ethane-1,2-dione, (20 g, 71.65 mmol),
 10 diaminomaleonitrile (8.5 g, 78.82 mmol) and acetic acid (6 ml) in ethanol (140 ml) and water (93 ml) was heated at 75 °C overnight. The reaction mixture was cooled, and water was added. The precipitate was filtered and washed with ethanol and then ether. The crude product was dissolved in DCM and treated with activated charcoal, then filtered through celite. The solid was recrystallized from DCM/ethanol to give the title compound (17.3 g,
 15 69%) as a solid.

¹H NMR (400 MHz) δ 7.49 (d, 4H), 7.38 (d, 4H).

Step B 5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)pyrazine-2,3-dicarboxylic acid



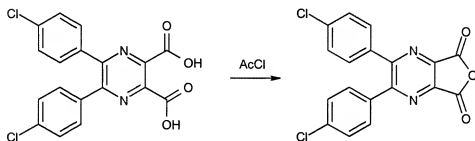
20

To a suspension of 5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)pyrazine-2,3-dicarbonitrile, Example 1, Step A (16.3 g, 46.28 mmol) and KOH (26 g, 463 mmol) in water (84 ml) was added hydrogen

peroxide (35%, 19 ml) followed by a few drops of nonanol to reduce foaming. The reaction mixture was boiled under reflux for 2h, cooled and washed with ether and acidified to pH 4 with 2M HCl. The precipitate was filtered, washed with water and dried under reduced pressure to give the crude product which was esterified by refluxing in hydrogen chloride/methanol (100 ml) followed by HPLC purification, giving 12.85 g of the methyl ester. The resulting methyl ester in acetonitrile (140 ml) and water (90 ml) was treated with lithium hydroxide (2.95 g, 0.123 mmol) at ambient temperature for 1.5 h. The acetonitrile was removed under reduced pressure and the aqueous solution was washed with diethyl ether. Acidification with hydrochloric acid (2M) gave the title compound (11.8 g, 66% mmol) as a pale yellow solid which was isolated by filtration.

^1H NMR (400 MHz) δ 7.51 (d, 4H), 7.41 (d, 4H). MS m/z 389, 391 (M+H) $^+$.

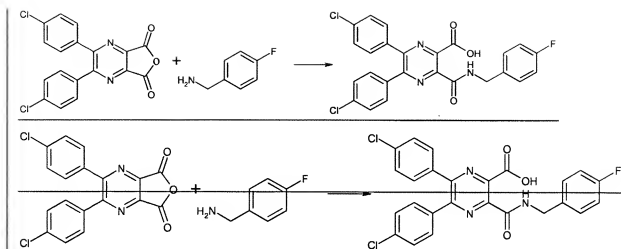
Step C 2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)furo[3,4-*b*]pyrazine-5,7-dione



A mixture of 5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)pyrazine-2,3-dicarboxylic acid, Example 1, Step B (6.7 g, 17.30 mmol) and acetyl chloride (20 ml) was boiled under reflux overnight. The excess of acetyl chloride was removed under reduced pressure to give the title compound (6.2 g, 97%) as a solid.

^1H NMR (400 MHz) δ 7.51 (d, 4H), 7.41 (d, 4H).

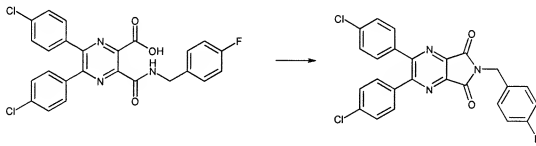
Step D 5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-3-[(4-fluorobenzyl)amino]carbonylpyrazine-2-carboxylic acid:

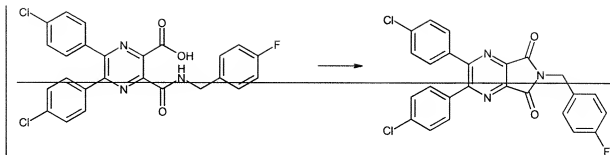


- 5 (4-Fluorobenzyl)amine (202 mg, 1.61 mmol) was mixed with 2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)furo[3,4-*b*]pyrazine-5,7-dione Ex. 1, Step C (544 mg, 1.47 mmol) in acetonitrile (10 ml). The reaction mixture was left at room temperature for 60 h. Evaporation followed by purification by HPLC gave the pure compound (700 mg, 96%).
¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 7.55-7.46 (m, 4H), 7.46-7.39 (m, 2H), 7.39-7.34 (m, 4H),
 10 7.08-7.01 (m, 2H) 4.60 (s, 2H).
 MS *m/z* calcd for [C₂₅H₁₇Cl₂N₃O₃F]⁺H⁺ 496.0631, found 496.0643 (M+H)⁺

Step E 2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-6-(4-fluorobenzyl)-5H-pyrrolo[3,4-*b*]pyrazine-5,7(6H)-dione :

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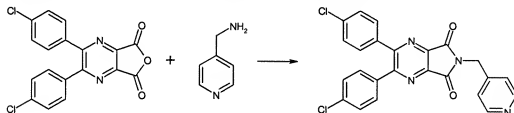
5,6-Bis(4-chlorophenyl)-3-((4-fluorobenzyl)amino)pyrazine-2-carboxylic acid, Ex.1, Step D (220 mg, 0.443 mmol) was dissolved in methylene chloride (5 ml). DMF (20 microlitres) was added and then oxalyl chloride (1 ml). After 1 hour at room temperature the solvent was removed in vacuo and the residue was purified by preparative HPLC to give the title compound (156 mg, 74%).

¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.52-7.42 (m, 6H), 7.36-7.30 (d, 4H), 7.05-6.96 ("t", 2H), 4.95 (s, 2H).

MS *m/z* calcd for [C₂₅H₁₄Cl₂FN₃O₂]⁺ 478.0528, found 478.0559 (M+H)⁺.

Example 2

2,3-Bis(4-chlorophenyl)-6-(pyridin-4-ylmethyl)-5H-pyrrolo[3,4-*b*]pyrazine-5,7(6*H*)-dione



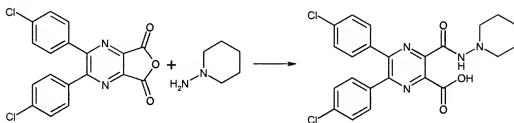
2,3-Bis(4-chlorophenyl)furo[3,4-*b*]pyrazine-5,7-dione, EX1, Step C (214 mg, 0.58 mmol) was dissolved in methylene chloride (3 ml) followed by (pyridin-4-ylmethyl)amine (62 mg, 0.58 mmol). After 5 days at room temperature, DMF (20 microlitres) and thionyl chloride (1 ml) were added. The solvent was removed in vacuo after 1 hour and the residue was purified by preparative HPLC to give the title compound (104 mg, 39%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.56 (broad s, 2H), 7.45 (d, 4H), 7.35-7.29 (m, 6H), 4.97 (s, 2H).

MS *m/z* calcd for [C₂₄H₁₄Cl₂N₄O₂]⁺ 461.0572, found 461.0585 (M+H)⁺

Example 3

StepA 5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-3-[(piperidin-1-ylamino)carbonyl]pyrazine-2-carboxylic acid:



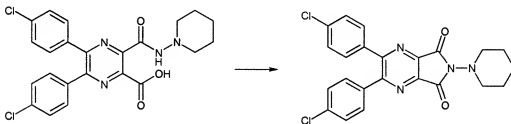
- 5 A solution of piperidin-1-amine (292 mg, 2.91 mmol) in acetonitrile (10 ml) was added to a solution of 2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)furo[3,4-*b*]pyrazine-5,7-dione, Ex1, Step C (1.03 g, 2.78 mmol) in acetonitrile (10 ml). After 2 hours the solvent was removed in vacuo and the title compound could be isolated by crystallization from acetonitrile. The yield was 807 mg (62%).

10

¹H NMR (400 MHz) δ 7.55 (d, 2H), 7.46 (d, 2H), 7.37 (d, 2H), 7.31 (d, 2H), 3.05-2.97 (m, 4H), 1.84-1.77 (m, 4H), 1.54-1.46 (m, 2H).

MS *m/z* calcd for [C₂₃H₂₁Cl₂N₄O₃]⁺H⁺ 471.0991, found 471.0994 (M+H)⁺.

- 15 Step B2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-6-piperidin-1-yl-5*ff*-pyrrolo[3,4-*b*]pyrazine-5,7(6*ff*)-dione:



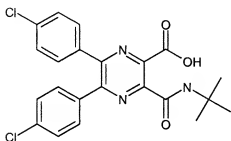
- 20 Oxalyl chloride (0.4 ml) was added to 5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-3-[(piperidin-1-ylamino)carbonyl]pyrazine-2-carboxylic acid (229 mg, 0.486 mmol) in methylene chloride (10 ml). After 10 minutes water was added and then sodium carbonate solution. The organic phase was washed with water and the solvent was evaporated. The product was isolated by crystallisation from methylene chloride/hexane (92 mg, 42%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz) δ 7.47 (d, 4H), 7.34 (d, 4H), 3.41-3.36 (m, 4H), 1.84-1.76 (m, 4H), 1.60-1.50 (m, 2H).

MS m/z calcd for $[C_{23}H_{18}Cl_2N_4O_2]H^+$ 453.0918, found 453.0885 (M+H)⁺.

Example 4

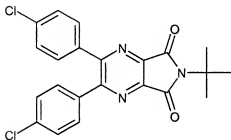
5 STEP A 3-[(*tert*-butylamino)carbonyl]-5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)pyrazine-2-carboxylic acid



10 To a solution of 2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)furo[3,4-*b*]pyrazine-5,7-dione, Ex.1, stepC (500 mg, 1.35 mmol) in acetonitrile (10 ml) was added *tert*-butylamine (99 mg, 1.35 mmol). The reaction mixture was stirred in room temperature for 1h 15min to give the subtitle compound. ¹H NMR (400 MHz) δ 7.46-7.41 (m, 4H), 7.38-7.34 (m, 4H), 1.41 (s, 9H). MS m/z 444 (M+H)⁺.

15

Step B 6-*tert*-butyl-2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-5H-pyrrolo[3,4-*b*]pyrazine-5,7(6H)-dione



20 To a solution of 3-[(*tert*-butylamino)carbonyl]-5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)pyrazine-2-carboxylic, Ex. 4, Step A (100 mg, 0.23mmol) in methylene chloride (5 ml) were added oxalyl chloride (2.5 ml) and a few drops of *N,N*-dimethylformamide. The reaction mixture was stirred in room temperature for 2hours. The mixture was then filtered through silica

and preparatory HPLC gave the title compound as a solid. ^1H NMR (400 MHz) δ 7.45 (d, 4H), 7.32 (d, 4H), 1.75 (s, 9H).

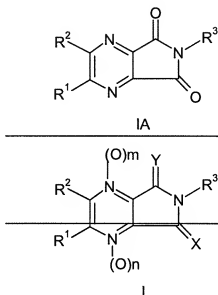
MS m/z 426 (M+H) $^+$.

APPLICATION No. 10/579,830

***Substitute Abstract
Marked to Show Changes***

ABSTRACT

The present invention relates to compounds of formula (IA)-I



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and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof, in which R^1 and R^2 independently represent phenyl, thienyl, pyridyl, C_{1-10} alkyl, C_{1-10} alkoxy or C_{3-15} cycloalkyl; R^3 represents a C_{3-4} alkyl, C_{1-4} alkyl group, C_{3-15} cycloalkyl, a phenyl C_{1-4} alkyl group, a heteroaryl group, a heteroaryl C_{1-4} alkyl group, or a group $R^4(CH_2)_n$ in which R^4 represents a saturated or partially unsaturated 5 to 8 membered heterocyclic group containing one or more heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen or sulphur and n is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4; X and Y independently represent O or S; m and n independently represent 0 or 1; wherein each of R^1 , R^2 , R^3 and R^4 is optionally substituted by one, two or three groups represented by Z wherein Z represents a C_{1-6} alkyl group optionally substituted by one or more fluoro, a C_{1-6} alkoxy group optionally substituted by one or more fluoro, hydroxy, halo, trifluoromethyl-sulphonyl, benzyl, nitro, amino, mono or di C_{1-4} alkylamino, mono or di C_{1-3} alkylamido, C_{1-3} alkylsulphonyl, C_{1-6} alkoxycarbonyl, carboxy, cyano, carbamoyl, mono or di C_{1-3} alkyl carbamoyl, sulphonamoyl or acetyl and processes for preparing such compounds, their use in the treatment of obesity, psychiatric and neurological disorders, to methods for their therapeutic use and to pharmaceutical compositions containing them.

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